

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

U.S. EMBASSY ISLAMABAD PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION GRANTS PROGRAM

Funding Opportunity Title: U.S. Embassy Islamabad PAS Grants Program

CFDA Number: 19.501 - Public Diplomacy Programs for Afghanistan and Pakistan

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

The U.S. Embassy Islamabad Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce funding is available through the embassy's Public Diplomacy Grants program. Please follow all instructions below carefully.

Purpose of Grant: Grants are intended for individuals, non-governmental organizations, private sector companies, think tanks, and academic institutions. They support projects to:

1. Expand media engagement.
2. Strengthen people-to-people ties.
3. Increase community engagement.

Funding is available for projects that increase the scope, capacity, and participation of civil society in building up the media and communications sectors in Pakistan, that support and develop Pakistani voices and new leaders capable of increasing community engagement, and that support civil society and boost institutional capacity. Grant proposals should aim to create or extend the community of reform-minded individuals and groups and should meet one or more of the following U.S. embassy public affairs priorities:

1. **Expanding Media Outreach**, by funding programs that: foster expanded outreach capabilities of Pakistani government institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), women's groups, and professional associations at the grassroots level; encourage use of new media and social networking to reach a wider audience, including new leaders in all fields; support radio programming in local languages at the provincial and district level; and sponsor traditional media training programs as well as instruction in blogging and other social networking mechanisms.
2. **Strengthening People-to-People Ties**, by funding programs that: support the Pakistani educational system; support civil society, and empower organizations and individuals that promote a robust civil society; support the promotion of local cultural heritage, traditional and modern art forms, and other forms of creative expression; provide exchange opportunities and expose a greater number of Pakistanis to different perspectives through

regional and international exchanges; and foster English language proficiency by providing English language programs and resources to reach a wider audience.

3. **Increase community engagement** by funding programs which: develop and support credible local broadcast content; counter insurgency falsehoods, messaging, and propaganda; promote national unity; present accurate information on U.S.-Pakistan cooperation; support and develop Pakistani voices and new leaders; provide educational and recreational opportunities for Pakistani youth.

Activities that are typically funded include, but are not limited to:

- new media concepts aimed at reaching wider audiences;
- radio broadcasting operations;
- media training projects;
- English language programs;
- proposals to expand U.S.- Pakistani exchange programs;
- programs that strengthen government and private sector communications capabilities;
- community service projects that practice democratic processes and encourage volunteerism;
- public education projects that promote democratic processes;
- proposals that support the dissemination of tolerant voices of traditional and community leaders;
- youth recreation, leadership, and education programs;
- cultural programs; and
- radio and television programming in support of the above objectives.

Activities that are not typically funded include, but are not limited to:

- social welfare projects;
- individual travel to conferences;
- paying to complete activities begun with other funds;
- projects that are inherently political in nature or that contain the appearance of partisanship/support to individual or single party electoral campaigns;
- political party activities; and,
- projects that support specific religious activities.

Background Information: The U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section in Islamabad is soliciting proposals for grants that fall into one of the areas specified above from individuals, non-governmental organizations, private sector companies, think tanks, and academic institutions. . More information about the Public Affairs Section and its Grants Program can be found at: <http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/>.

II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement or Grant

Floor of Individual Award Amounts: \$50,000

Ceiling of Individual Award Amounts: \$500,000

The U.S. Embassy Islamabad Public Affairs Section reserves the right to award less or more than the funds described in the absence of worthy applications or under such other circumstances as it may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. government.

Project and Budget Periods: Grant projects generally must be completed in one year or less. The Public Affairs Section will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards, beyond the initial budget period, on a noncompetitive basis, subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

III. Eligibility Information:

The U.S. Embassy Islamabad Public Affairs Section encourages applications from U.S. and Pakistani:

- Registered not-for-profit think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with at least **three years** of programming experience.
- Educational Institutions.

NOTE: For the **increase community engagement** theme, some private sector companies may be eligible. Please contact USINFOISB@State.gov for more information.

The U.S. Embassy Islamabad Public Affairs Section encourages applicants to provide cost-sharing from additional sources in support of this project. The Public Affairs Section also encourages projects that use highly skilled volunteers as an element of cost-sharing. Applications should explain clearly other likely sources of funding and how the volunteers will be used. Such cost-sharing aspects will weigh in favor of applicants for these grants.

IV. Application Submission and Deadline

Proposals should be submitted online to the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad at the following email address: USINFOISB@state.gov. Applications are accepted in English only, and final grant agreements will be concluded in English.

When submitting a proposal, applicants are required to include the Federal Assistance Application (Standard Form 424), which is available, along with guidance for completing this form, at: www.grants.gov or http://fa.statebuy.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68. Applicants are recommended to complete and submit the suggested local grants application format attached to this announcement. Applicants must complete and submit a detailed budget.

V. Review and Selection Process

Each application submitted under this announcement will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the criteria enumerated below. The criteria are designed to assess the quality of the proposed project, and to determine the likelihood of its success. The criteria are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application. Applications will be reviewed on the basis of their fullness, coherence, clarity, and attention to detail. Points are awarded only to applications that are responsive within the context of this program announcement.

Applicants must submit a full project description in accordance with the following instructions and the specified evaluation criteria. The instructions give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria provide details of more program-specific information that is needed.

Cover Sheet: Provide a summary of the project description (no more than two pages) with reference to the amount and duration of the funding request.

Narrative: Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state reasons for taking the proposed approach rather than alternatives. Describe any unusual features of the project, such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates. List those organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

Application Evaluation Criteria:

1. Goals and Objectives – The project is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results and the organization. The project addresses one or more of the U.S. Embassy Islamabad Public Affairs Section priorities outlined previously. Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provide milestones to indicate progress toward Public Affairs Section goals. (30 points)

2. Strengths and Innovation – Applicant clearly describes how its proposal will address the requested program within the proposed time frame and articulates an innovative strategy or plan. The project builds civil society leadership and capacity, and demonstrates sustainable capacity building. (30 points)

3. Organizational Capacity – The organization has expertise in one or more of U.S. Embassy Islamabad Public Affairs Section priorities and demonstrates the ability to perform the proposed activities. Where partners are described, the applicant details each partner's respective role and provides curriculum vitas (CVs) for persons responsible for the project and financial administration. Each key person responsible for the proposed project and its financial administration is listed and a CV for these persons is provided. (30 points)

4. Budget and Budget Justification – The budget and narrative justification are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results and the plan for services is realistic. (10 points)

VI. Award Administration

Award Notices: The grant award or cooperative agreement shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is the U.S. government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

Anticipated Time to Award: Applicants should expect to be notified of the recommended concepts within 90 days after the submission deadline.

Reporting Requirements: All awards issued under this announcement will require both program and financial reports on a frequency specified in the award agreement. The disbursement of funds may be tied to submission of these reports in a timely manner. All other details related to award administration will be specified in award agreement as well.